CHEAP RAIL TRAVEL DETAILS

CHANNELCON

THE 1982 BRITISH EASTER SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION
APRIL 9TH—12TH, 1982

Progress Report 2 *November 1981*

Joint Guest of Honour

Angela Carter

HOTEL BOOKING FORM ENCLOSED

BRITISH RAIL COMES UP TRUMPS!

With this PR we are sending you details of British Rail's special conference rail fares. These offer a saving of approximately 30% on the ordinary return fare. For example, London to Brighton ordinary return (no weekend return is available) costs £8.90, but the conference rate is £6.00. In addition, rail fares are due to rise in April, but it has been agreed that we can use the current rates. If you've got a railcard, you obviously won't be interested: if you haven't, it looks a good deal.

Possible dates of outward travel include:

Thursday 8th April 1982
Friday 9th April 1982
Saturday 10th April 1982

— Pat Charnock

Hotel & booking forms

Enclosed with this Progress Report is your hotel booking form. This should be returned direct to the Metropole Hotel, please — not to Channelcon. The bookings will be filled by the hotel on a first-come first-served basis, so the earlier you return your form the more likely you are to get the rooms of your choice – and to get into the hotel.

A reminder of the Metropole's room rates for Channelcon:

£13.50 per night for a single room
£12.50 per person per night for a double/twin room

This includes buffet English breakfast but will be subject to VAT (service is not charged). The Metropole itself has 580 beds; if we fill these, its sister hotel, the Bedford, is only 100 yards away along the seafront.

You are, of course, responsible for paying your own room bills.

Continental Breakfast is available in rooms at no extra charge for those staying at the Metropole. Dogs can be kept in the hotel at a charge of £2.50 per day excluding food, but we regret that cats are not allowed by the hotel. Cots are available at £1.50 per night (plus VAT).

— Eve Harvey

Membership Rates

	Until 1 Dec. 1981	Applications post-marked 1 Dec. '81 or after
Attending membership	£6.00	£7.00
Supporting membership	£3.00	£3.00
Conversion from supporting to attending	£3.00	£4.00

The £1.00 discount for presupporting members remains valid. Children under 12 attend free. Cheques and postal orders, payable to "Channelcon", should be sent (along of course with your name and address) to Channelcon, 4 Fletcher Rd., Chiswick, London W4 5AY.

Please let us know (at the above address) if we've got your name and address wrong, or if you move: or you may fail to receive further Channelcon progress reports.

— Pat Charnock

Programme

By now, as you might expect, the programme is beginning to take shape. Even if I do say so myself, I think it's looking quite good. I'm trying to get a nice balance between films, panels and other items, and if everything works out there should be something to suit every taste.

I'm pleased to say that a number of people have already sent suggestions for programme items, and a couple look really interesting. No, I'm not going to say what they are just yet; at this stage things are still dependent on getting people to agree to appear. But if you have a pet project, a programme item you would really like to see at Channelcon, there's still time to let me know. My main concern is putting together a programme that you will enjoy, and the best way to ensure that is to let me know what it is you want to see. If you have any ideas, please try to let me know before the New Year, so that I have time to contact possible participants.

Now, a question: how much do you know about science fiction? A few of you have already put themselves forward as sf Masterminds, but we can make room for one or two more if you fancy facing the inquisition. This is your chance to show us what a genius you are. And let's face it, if you don't enter you're going to be sitting in the audience saying to yourself: I know more than he does. So prove that you do know more. The title Science Fiction Mastermind is there for the taking. But if you are going to enter, please let me know as soon as possible so that there is time to have specialist questions set.

Among the usual bits and pieces that are included in the programe is a bidding session for the next Easter Convention. This session will not include a business meeting along the lines of Albacon and the Worldcon, but if enough of you are interested in such a meeting we will be able to include one on the alternate programme (about which, more details next time). If you are interested please contact me as soon as possible with suggestions for what you would like to see on the agenda.

And that's about it for the time being. By the time the next Progress Report comes out I should be able to give you details about some of the programme items that will be happening. Until then, if you have any ideas, or want to enter for Mastermind, my address is:

— Paul Kincaid, 114 Guildhall St., Folkestone, Kent CT20 1ES.

Book Room

The bookroom will be situated in the County Suite, which should give booksellers ample space without having to use subsidiary rooms. The tables will be 5 ft long and the rates will be £10 per table. Table charges will be collected at the convention. Anyone wishing to book tables should contact me at 28 Duckett Rd., London N4 1BN.

— Chris Atkinson

ANGELA CARTER

an appreciation by CHRIS MORGAN

"I haven't actually read any of her books, but I remember meeting her brother Lin at Seacon," said an acquaintance of mine (thus proving that Philistinism is alive and well and infiltrating fandom like a parasitic worm).

I half wish that I, too, hadn't read any of Angela Carter's books, so that I could wallow in the joy of discovering her work for the very first time. Re-reading her work (for which this article gave me a welcome excuse) can be rewarding because of the wealth of beauty, incident and allusion it contains, but the first time is the best.

"But hang on a moment," (I hear you cry) "there's no mention of Angela Carter in the Encyclopaedia of Spaceships and Aliens. And is she a fan?"

Well, no, Ms. Carter is not (so far as I know) a fan. Nor does she write about spaceships and aliens. While all her fiction is, to a greater or lesser extent, speculative, she is one of the darlings of the critics of mainstream literature (to whom, almost universally, science fiction is anathema). They shower her writing with compliments (every one deserved) and present her with awards (while the sf fraternity has all too often contrived to ignore her). The compliments are, for instance, "One of the best writers of her generation" — Auberon Waugh. The awards are not the familiar Hugos and Nebulas which are handed out for above-average (or, occasionally, below-average) work within our own ghetto, but they are such as the John Llewellyn Rees Memorial Prize (for her 1967 novel The Magic Toyshop), the Somerset Maugham Award (for her 1968 novel Several Perceptions) and the Cheltenham Festival Literary Award (for her 1979 collection The Bloody Chamber), for which much wider ranges and greater numbers of writers compete. And it's nice to be able to report that she's British.

If you haven't read anything by Angela Carter you'll probably have found all the foregoing rather infuriating, because although it tells you that a lot of people, some in high places, think her writing is Very Good, it doesn't even begin to say why.

As with most Very Good writers, her work is not all that easy to read; to get enjoyment out of it you've got to put some effort into it; skip-reading is forbidden, okay? She is primarily an original stylist, with form taking precedence over narrative and, as in the case of more recent work by Samuel R. Delany or Gene Wolfe, if you don't pause to relish the style you'll miss a lot. To generalise, she concentrates more on producing a series of surrealistic images (like a magician, astounding her audience with each one) than on telling a fast-moving story. That is not to suggest that her images do not fit together seamlessly to form a coherent plot, for they do. But her first concern seems to be those images — frequently bizarre and more often than not redolent with symbolic meaning at a number of levels.

Did you notice that word, bizarre? It's an essential one in trying to describe her fiction, for she seems fascinated by all things bizarre and manages to find the bizarre and fantastic in everyday things. Take her characters: almost none of the important ones are wholly sane. Some are unsuccessful suicides, some are homicidal, some have physical defects or embellishments, and they waltz around each other in descending spirals, forming complex and intrinsically sad relationships. Where personal beauty is present it is always a flawed beauty or else is soon rendered imperfect (the corruption of innocence is one of Ms. Carter's recurrent themes). (Ghislane, in Shadow Dance/Honeybuzzard, is probably her most beautiful female character, except that she has a terrible

scar the length of her face, the morals of a whore, and a total lack of self-respect.) The result is that her characters are frequently unpleasant but never less than fascinating.

She is a fearless writer, never shying away from a subject, and she is startlingly original in everything she does. That combination makes her sound like part of sf's new wave, but she isn't part of anything; she's too original for that. One of her attributes which should be most familiar to you is a fine appreciation of the horrific. Her approach may be described as psychological gothic, showing how even the familiar can become awfully frightening if something interferes with one's perception of a scene or a person. ("One day, Anabel saw the sun and the moon in the sky at the same time. The sight filled her with a terror which entirely consumed her. .." — Love.) The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman (a fantasy novel set in the future) is largely concerned with distorted perception.

Although none of her work is simple there has been a noticeable increase in its complexity over the passing years, since her first novel was published in 1966. Of her earlier novels, two from the late 1960s have recently been reprinted in paperback. The Magic Toyshop (despite its title, a non-fantasy piece about a teenage girl whose situation deteriorates as she matures) is available from Virago, while Penguin have brought out Heroes and Villains. The latter can be classed as sf, since it is set in a post-holocaust future, though this setting is simply a device to distance her action from the present, enabling her to better explore her main thesis that the labels "hero" and "villain" are artificial results of our perspective on life. (By coincidence, its plot, too, concerns the deteriorating situation of a teenage girl.) And you may still be able to get hold of the Arrow paperback of her most recent fantasy novel, The Passion of New Eve (which obdurately defies my feeble attempts at one-line summarisation).

Angela Carter is not solely a novelist. Two collections of her stories have been published, Fireworks and The Bloody Chamber (another recent Penguin; a series of exquisitely perverted fairy tales). Her sole non-fiction book, The Sadeian Women (now a Virago paperback) is a study of the Marquis de Sade's distortions of women and sex; it's subtitled "an exercise in cultural history". She has had one radio play performed, Vampirella (BBC Radio 3, 1976), which I still fondly remember as one of the best radio plays I've ever heard. It was an audacious and irreverent look at the middle-European vampire myth, written with tongue in cheek (did I mention that Ms. Carter is, on occasion, an extremely witty writer?) and it would be a Good Thing if Channelcon could get hold of a tape of it as a programme item. Also, Angela Carter is a critic and journalist; I've noticed her pieces in such places as New Society, The Times Educational Supplement and Radio Times.

If she speaks only half as well as she writes, her Guest of Honour address is going to be superb.

Art Show

There will be a fair amount of space in our Art Show, but it is not totally unlimited. As we are making special arrangements to provide the display screens for the Art Show, we need to know as early as possible about the likely demand for art display space, and if the demand is heavy it may not be possible to meet everybody's needs fully. Please write to me as soon as possible if you want to exhibit art in our Art Show.

We are looking for volunteers to look after the Art Show during the con: please write to me if you would like to help.

— Chris Atkinson, 28 Duckett Rd., London N4 1BN.

Channelcon Members from 24.5.81 to 8.10.81

A = Attending S = Supporting

207 Alun Harries (A)
208 Nick Shears (A)
209 Audrey Shears (A)
210 Mike Gould (A)
211 Martin Tudor (A)
212 Paul Turner (S)
213 Martyn Taylor (A)
214 Margaret Banks (A)
215 Su Worrall (A)
216 Ken Worrall (A)
217 Madawc Williams (A)
218 David Breen (A)
219 Chris Evans (A)
220 Brian Stableford (A)
221 Vivien Stableford (A)
222 John Dell (A)
223 Martin Stallard (A)
224 Charlotte Bulmer (A)
225 Keith H. Freeman (S)
226 Colin Wightman (A)
227 Peter Holdsworth (A)
228 Ivy Francis (A)
229 Lisa Holdsworth (A)
230 Dave Haden (A)
231 Dave Symes (A)
232 Fay Symes (A)
233 Tim Groome (A)
234 Martin Reed (A)
235 Richard Kennaway (A)
236 John Brunner (A)
237 Joe M. Nevin (A)
238 Dave French (A)
239 Peter Thompson (A)
240 Jerry Elsmore (A)
241 Terry Hill (A)
242 Margaret Hill (A)
243 Lindsay Wakeman (A)
244 John I. Davies (A)
245 Malcolm Davies (S)
246 Kate Davies (S)
247 Paul Paolini (A)
248 Janis Holt (A)
249 Dorinda Blackley (A)
250 Russell Shallcross (A)
251 Linda Hutchinson (A)
252 Mike Hutchinson (A)
253 Andrew Rose (A)
254 Trevor Briggs (A)
255 Simon Bostock (A)
256 Dave Hicks (A)
257 Martin Tee (A)
258 Frances-Jane Nelson (A)
259 Sam J. Lundwall (A)
260 Ingrid Olofsdotter (A)
261 Paul Stewart (A)
262 Tony Cullen (A)
263 Kay Allan (A)
264 Ray Thompson (A)
265 Nick Lowe (A)
266 Serpentina the Sad (A)
267 Anna Conda (S)
268 Margaret Welbank (A)
269 Bruce Saville (A)
270 Jimmy Charnock (A)
271 Sandy Brown (A)
272 Helen Brown (A)
273 Elspeth Brown (A)
274 Derek Hepburn (A)
275 Anne Hepburn (A)
276 Clare Coney (A)
277 John Bush (A)
278 Mal Ashworth (A)
279 Douglas Hill (A)
280 Michael Hill (A)
281 Peter Day (A)
282 Malcolm Smale (A)
283 Jonathan Cowie (A)
284 Kevin Dixon (A)
285 Val Dixon (A)
286 Judith Hanna (A)
287 Andrew Hall (A)
288 Mike Hearn (A)
289 Hazel Ashworth (A)
290 A. Belsey (A)
291 Julian Gotobed (A)
292 Keith A. Mackie (A)
293 Kevin Dyerson (A)
294 John Gordon (A)
295 Peter Douglass (A)
296 Naveed Khan (S)
297 Graham Tapp (A)
298 Mark Banfield (A)
299 June Banfield (A)
300 Dulcie Jackson (A)
301 T. O'Sullivan (A)
302 Johan Flaton (A)
303 Keith Mitchell (S)
304 Phil James (A)
305 Kevin Clarke (A)
306 Siv Tapper (S)
307 Sheila Pover (A)
308 David Harrison (A)
309 Richard Fuller (A)
310 Joyce Scrivner (A)
311 Chrissie Lovett (A)
312 Steve Lovett (A)

Fan Room

I just wanted to remind you that I'm still looking for material for the "Fannish Year" display that I'm planning as part of the Channelcon Fan Room. As I said in the last PR, I'd like to cover any event which might be of interest to fans, occurring between Easter '81 and '82. I've managed to track down information on many of the items I want to cover but it's still not as complete as I would like. To remind you, I'm looking for:

Information on Conventions. If you're holding a con in this period or planning to hold one in the year after Channelcon, can you please send me details of name, venue,

dates, GoH, and costs?

Fan Groups. Can I have details of your group, when it meets and where? I have a list culled from the one published in Matrix earlier this year so if you weren't on that or the information has changed, please contact me.

Fanzines. These have been coming in; thank you. I'm planning to publish an index of zines published in the period, so could you please send a copy of your fanzine either to me or another committee member or, failing that, just send me details of your zine: name, address, availability, size, printing process and a brief description of contents.

And I'm also very interested in "SCI FI FREAKS" type news stories and items featuring people with names similar to well known fans. Clippings greatly appreciated.

I've got a rough programme drafted out and I'm working on quite a few items which I hope will go down well. If you'd like to help out on the programme or have any ideas, comments, criticisms etc. please contact me at: 113 Windsor Road, Falkirk, Stirlingshire FK1 5DB, Central Scotland. Tel. (0324) 35452 after six pm.

Fans of the Great Egg Race... can you think of a device for transporting a pint of bitter from one side of the room to the other intact without spilling it — and without drinking it? — or a pork pie, on its edge, from one side of the room to the other without it rolling off? (The pork pie must be on a flat surface. No electric or clockwork motors are allowed.) More details in the next PR, but get your thinking caps on now! The more obscure and outrageous the better, of course.

— Jim Barker

Fancy Dress

This is your jackbooted commander here, reminding you that any attempt at some kind of costume will be much appreciated, and does not have to be entered for the parade itself. Wear something crazy for the fun of it (remember fun?). Camera freaks and budding Lord Lichfields may like to know that there will be a camera call for posed photos half an hour before the event itself similar to that at Seacon '79 (remember Seacon?), and they will be given a list of the contestants to aid them.

Entries can be sent in now, or given in by noon on the day of the event to the reception desk or to me directly.

— Anne Page

FANCY DRESS ENTRY FORM

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Title of entry:.....

Commentary:.....

.....

Any special effects needed: .....

.....

(Continue on separate sheet if needed.)

Send to: Anne Page, 11 Manor Farm Rd., Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2HT.

Babysitting

It was suggested in Progress Report 1 that the convention should provide a creche or a children's room, and we asked anyone who would like to take advantage of such a service to contact us. So far there has been little response, but we are still planning such a service. If anyone is interested in using a creche or children's room for their offspring, please get in touch with me at 28 Duckett Rd., London N4 1BN, as soon as possible, to give us some idea of the likely demand.

— Chris Atkinson

Advertising Rates

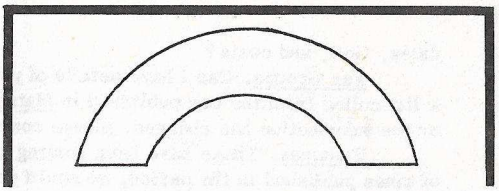
		Pro	Fan
Progress Reports:	B/cover	£20.00	£20.00
	Page	£17.00	£9.00
	½ page	£9.00	£6.00
	¼ page	£7.00	£4.00
Programme Book:	B/cover	£40.00	£40.00
	Page	£33.00	£20.00
	½ page	£20.00	£12.00
	¼ page	£12.00	£8.00

Page size: A4 reduced to A5. See PR1 for details.

Special processing: Any extra costs passed on to advertiser; enquire as to availability, and allow extra time. See PR1 for details.

Copy deadlines:
Progress Report 3: 1st December 1981
Progress Report 4: 1st February 1982
Programme Book: 15th February 1982

Advertising enquiries to: Linda Pickersgill, 7a Lawrence Road, Ealing, London W5. Phone (01) 568 8174.



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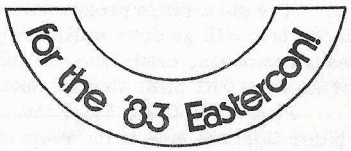

Bidding committee: Dave Langford, chairman; Dermot Dobson, John Harvey, Martin Hoare, Rob Jackson, Ian Maule, Joseph Nicholas, Kev Smith, John Stewart.
Presupporting membership £1.00 to Ian Maule, 5 Beaconsfield Road, New Malden, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT3 3HY.

LEXICON

GUEST OF HONOUR
BOB SHAW

28-31 MAY 1982
AT THE
WIGSTON STAGE HOTEL
LEICESTER

REGISTRATION FORMS OBTAINABLE FROM:

TONY CULLEN
43 STATION ROAD,
KIRBY MUXLOE,
LEICESTER. LE9 9EL